

Iraqis team up with Cav in western Baghdad

By Staff Sgt. Kason Fark
2nd Bn, 12th Cav. Reg.

BAGHDAD-Staring down at an empty lot, Spc. Craig McBaine wondered how such a

tranquil neighborhood could be the scene of so much carnage. Nicknamed "IED Alley East," this 700-meter stretch of barren earth has been the scene of many attacks against coalition

and Iraqi security forces.

On this day, the patch of land, bordered on three sides by once-beautiful three-story houses, is occupied by up-armored Humvees, Bradley

Fighting Vehicles and Abrams Battle Tanks, all in support of Operation Beastmaster.

During Beastmaster, troops from the 4th Battalion, 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division cleared three large neighborhoods in the western Baghdad suburb of Ghazaliya. The sight of much sectarian violence, Ghazaliya is the battle ground for Sunni insurgents trying to push back the overwhelming Shia population in the northern and eastern areas of Baghdad.

"Alternate Supply Route Sword," the U.S. military's name for the largest road running through southern Ghazaliya, is also the in-road from Fallujah to Baghdad proper.

Having just arrived weeks ago, Soldiers of Company D, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, attached to 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st



(Photo by Air Force Master Sgt. Michael Buytas)

A Soldier from Company D, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, attached to 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, communicates with his squad leader while pulling security during Operation Beastmaster.

Long distance conversation with children, brings tears, smiles

By Amanda Kim Stairrett
Killeen Daily Herald

FORT HOOD, Texas - As Sgt. Troy Lewis Sr.'s family walked down a hall in 1st Cavalry Division headquarters Dec. 29, a wooden door at the end swung open.

"There he is!" said Laura Clark, Lewis' fiancée, as she gasped and covered her mouth.

At the front of the room, the sergeant's smiling face filled a large video screen.

Troy Jr., Lewis' 6-year-old son, spot-

ted his dad and the excitement began. For the next 15 minutes, the room was filled with ecstatic chatter from Laura; Troy Jr.; Elizabeth Long, Troy Jr.'s mother; Erin Clark, Laura's 4-year-old daughter; Jonathan Reed, Laura's 6-year-old grandson; and Thomas Long, Elizabeth's husband, a retired Army major.

Lewis deployed in October to Iraq with the 2nd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division; this was the first time he was able to see his family, although they

have communicated by phone.

"This is the best thing I could get," Lewis said, with a wide grin.

Troy Jr., Elizabeth and Thomas traveled to Fort Hood from their home in Houma, La., to participate in the videoteleconference. Laura, Erin and Jonathan live in the area.

Troy Jr. thought that his dad was waiting for him at Fort Hood and Elizabeth had

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Making a Difference on Freedom's Frontier

By Maj. Gen. Joseph F. Fil, Jr., CG, MND-B

Only a few months removed from our stateside homes, the ringing in of the New Year makes me reflect on the freedoms we enjoy as Americans and the hope we carry to the Iraqi people.

We all take our freedoms for granted, until we leave the comfort of our homes and see the simple truth, here in Iraq, that freedom isn't free.

Sacrifice and selfless service got us to this point. For the 1st Cavalry Division, 2006 saw the division complete its transformation into a new modular model, where brigade combat teams can take on battle space independent of their division headquarters, if need be. We also saw our aviators complete a humanitarian mission in Pakistan, assisting tens of thousands of people devastated by an earthquake, even as they prepared themselves for the

mission here in the Iraqi capital.

Our formations trained hard to bring us to this point. We certified that preparation with rotations to training centers at Fort Irwin, Calif., and Fort Polk, La. We spent countless hours on the ranges, MOUT sites and training area at Fort Hood and Fort Bliss, Texas.

We all said good-bye to loved ones, tearful farewells frozen in time until we return to tears of joy at our return.

In the short time since we've been here we completed a seamless transition of authority, worked tirelessly to assist the good people of Iraq, we've fought a ruthless enemy, and witnessed the first transition of provincial control to the citizens of Najaf.

We look forward to provincial control of Babil, Karbala, and Baghdad going to the Iraqis. We will continue to train and work closely with the



(Photo by Staff Sgt. Mary Rose)

Maj. Gen. Joseph F. Fil, Jr. CG, MND-B

Iraqi security forces throughout our area of operation, setting the security conditions to allow the Iraqi people to realize their full potential.

2007 will be a year of transition, as Iraqi security forces take the lead in securing the peace and prosperity of their nation. We will assist in setting the conditions for the government of Iraq to operate free from terror.

We will take a stand against the sectarian violence and deny terrorists, thugs and

radicals safe haven in our areas, capturing and killing them when necessary.

I applaud your service, and I mourn the sacrifice we've already laid on the altar of freedom. The cost is steep, yet we all know this is a fight for freedom.

We've seen tremendous support from our families and friends on the home front during the holiday season. Whether it was baked goods or a simple holiday greeting card to a lonely, young trooper, the outpouring of support for our Soldiers from the American people was amazing.

You deserve it. You, the Soldiers of the Multi-National Division - Baghdad, are performing magnificently. This New Year will call on your continued courage, vigilance and dedication to duty.

I know that you are all up to the job ahead. We are the right team at the right time.

First Team!

Arabic Phrase of the Day

satih

**Defined:
roof**

Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



Today

High: 54
Low: 30



Tomorrow

High: 56
Low: 31



Wednesday

High: 59
Low: 28

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Videoconference unites Soldier with family

VTC

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to explain the videoteleconference to him.

Topics during the video meeting ranged from gummy eyeballs to Christmas to bowling. It was a flurry of noise and action while the three children shouted into a microphone and Lewis, who appeared just as excited, answered their questions.

The videoteleconference was special for the sergeant, who only found out about it the night before.

"I'm so glad that you guys

did this," he said later. "This is a surprise."

Lewis let the kids know that he has just received two packages from the family. One of those contained a Web camera so they wouldn't have to go to First Team headquarters every time they wanted to see Lewis.

Fort Hood families have corresponded with their Soldiers by videoteleconferences for several years, and several families were at the headquarters building Friday afternoon.

For Christmas, Troy Jr. sent his dad a stocking full of

interesting candy: gummy worms, eyeballs and bugs.

"Aw, that was good," Lewis said, laughing, when Elizabeth and the kids asked if he received them.

Elizabeth said before the videoteleconference that Lewis had a dry sense of humor and had offered some of the gummy eyeballs to a few reluctant Iraqis.

When time began to run out, it fueled another round of quick-fire questions and last shouts of "I love yous" and "I miss yous."

At nearly the last minute, Troy Jr. remembered what he

was wearing.

"Daddy, I'm in my uniform!" he shouted.

"Oh, let me see," his father asked.

The camouflaged boy got shy and didn't want to stand up, so Thomas shouted, "He looks just like you, Troy!"

When it was time to end the conversation, the sergeant reluctantly left the microphone, but came back several times for more words for his family.

"God bless you. Thank you so much, everybody," he said.

"I'll call you," he promised his fiancée, whom he will marry during mid-tour leave in March.

Tears streamed down Laura's face as she walked back down the hallway leading away from the giant video screen.

"This meant a lot to him," Elizabeth said.

The two women discussed the sergeant as they stood in the lobby of the headquarters building, chatting about how healthy he looked.

This was the first time everyone - former wife, future wife, children and stepchildren - were together.

That made his day, Elizabeth said, and when it makes his day, it makes other Soldiers' days.

Knowing that the family gets along and provides support to each other makes it easier for Lewis during this deployment, Laura said. She has received most of her information about Lewis from him and Elizabeth. Laura hopes to get on the Family Readiness Group's notification list soon, but until then, relies on Elizabeth for information and support.



Photo by Steve Traynor, Killeen Daily Herald

Tears mixed with joy at Fort Hood as the family of Sgt. Troy Lewis said their good-byes during a video teleconference with the 1st Cav. Div. Soldier, Dec. 29. Lewis is currently deployed in Iraq, and the teleconference allowed his ex-wife, Elizabeth Long, left, his son, Troy Jr., bottom right, and his fiancée, Laura Clark, right, and her grandson, Jonathan Reed, to see the Soldier for the first time since he deployed.

Operation Beastmaster goes live in west Baghdad

Team

From Page 1

Infantry Division, have set upon the goal of taking over the security of Ghazaliya from the Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division.

"It's been pretty crazy

already," McBaine said. The Florida native's patrol would later be hit multiple times by small arms fire, a rocket-propelled grenade and a roadside bomb.

Based out of Fort Bliss, Texas, 2-12 Cavalry is part of the 1st Cavalry Division's newest brigade - the 4th "Long Knife" Brigade Combat Team.

While the unit may be new to El Paso, Texas, it is no stranger to combat.

2-12 Cavalry was de-activated shortly after its return from Operation Iraqi Freedom II in March 2005.

The unit has also earned streamers in other conflicts such as WWII, Vietnam, and Desert Storm.

The unit was the first U.S. unit in Leyte and Japan. The unit re-activated at Fort Bliss 18 months after returning from Iraq.

Participation in operations,


such as Beastmaster, with the Iraqi Army is the key to handing Iraq back over to its people. The Iraqi soldiers involved were being observed by coalition forces to gauge their ability to perform urban warfare tasks.

Overall, Op Beastmaster was a huge success. In the course of three days of house to house searches, the Iraqi Army troops uncovered seven weapons caches, numerous roadside bomb-making materials and captured a high-value target.



(Photo by Air Force Master Sgt. Michael Buytas)

Staff Sgt. Javier Marroquin, Company D, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, attached to 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, maintains communications with his platoon leader while Iraqi soldiers search a small store in the Baghdad neighborhood of Ghazaliya.



MULTINATIONAL DIVISION - BAGHDAD
Presents:
REV DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION
"A DAY ON...NOT A DAY OFF"

Jan 15th

- 6 - 7:30a.m.: Fun Run/Walk


Prizes for 1st, 2nd, & 3rd place winners

Rally point for the Run/Walk will be on the cement platform next to the Camp Liberty MWR


- 6:30 - 8p.m.: Rev Dr. MLK, Jr. Birthday Observance

**Location: Division Chapel (Camp Liberty)*


Guest Speaker



BG Vincent Brooks
(DCG-S)



First Team
POWER THOUGHT



"I CAN SAVE MY OWN LIFE"

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
I am responsible for my own safety both on and off post.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?
Because I AM important, my friends and family love me,
My unit needs me, and my nation is depending on me.

MONTHLY BASIC PAY TABLE

EFFECTIVE 1 JANUARY 2007

YEARS OF SERVICE

PAY GRADE	<2	2	3	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26
COMMISSIONED OFFICERS															
O-10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	13659.00	13725.90	14011.20	14508.60
O-9	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11946.60	12118.50	12367.20	12801.30
O-8	8453.10	8729.70	8913.60	8964.90	9194.10	9577.20	9666.30	10030.20	10134.30	10447.80	10900.80	11319.00	11598.30	11598.30	11598.30
O-7	7023.90	7350.00	7501.20	7621.20	7838.40	8052.90	8301.30	8548.80	8797.20	9577.20	10236.00	10236.00	10236.00	10236.00	10287.90
O-6	5206.20	5719.20	6094.50	6094.50	6117.60	6380.10	6414.60	6414.60	6779.10	7423.80	7802.10	8180.10	8395.20	8613.00	9035.70
O-5	4339.80	4888.80	5227.50	5291.10	5502.00	5628.60	5906.40	6110.10	6373.20	6776.40	6968.10	7158.00	7373.10	7373.10	7373.10
O-4	3744.60	4334.70	4623.90	4688.40	4956.90	5244.60	5602.80	5882.40	6076.20	6187.50	6252.30	6252.30	6252.30	6252.30	6252.30
O-3	3292.20	3732.30	4028.40	4392.00	4602.00	4833.00	4982.70	5228.40	5355.90	5355.90	5355.90	5355.90	5355.90	5355.90	5355.90
O-2	2844.30	3239.70	3731.40	3857.40	3936.60	3936.60	3936.60	3936.60	3936.60	3936.60	3936.60	3936.60	3936.60	3936.60	3936.60
O-1	2469.30	2569.80	3106.50	3106.50	3106.50	3106.50	3106.50	3106.50	3106.50	3106.50	3106.50	3106.50	3106.50	3106.50	3106.50
COMMISSIONED OFFICERS WITH OVER 4 YEARS ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE AS AN ENLISTED MEMBER OR WARRANT OFFICER															
O-3E	0.00	0.00	0.00	4392.00	4602.00	4833.00	4982.70	5228.40	5435.40	5554.20	5715.90	5715.90	5715.90	5715.90	5715.90
O-2E	0.00	0.00	0.00	3857.40	3936.60	4062.00	4273.50	4437.00	4558.80	4558.80	4558.80	4558.80	4558.80	4558.80	4558.80
O-1E	0.00	0.00	0.00	3106.50	3317.70	3440.10	3565.50	3688.80	3857.40	3857.40	3857.40	3857.40	3857.40	3857.40	3857.40
WARRANT OFFICERS															
W-5	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5845.80	6046.50	6247.50	6450.00
W-4	3402.00	3660.00	3765.00	3868.50	4046.40	4222.20	4400.70	4574.10	4753.80	5035.50	5215.80	5392.20	5574.90	5754.90	5938.80
W-3	3106.80	3236.40	3369.00	3412.80	3552.00	3711.30	3921.60	4129.20	4350.00	4515.60	4680.60	4751.40	4824.60	4984.20	5143.20
W-2	2732.70	2888.70	3025.50	3124.50	3209.70	3443.70	3622.50	3755.10	3885.00	3973.80	4048.80	4191.00	4332.30	4475.40	4475.40
W-1	2413.20	2610.60	2742.90	2828.40	3056.10	3193.50	3315.30	3451.20	3541.20	3622.80	3755.40	3856.20	3856.20	3856.20	3856.20
ENLISTED MEMBERS															
E-9	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4110.60	4203.90	4321.20	4459.50	4598.40	4821.60	5010.30	5209.20	5512.80
E-8	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3364.80	3513.90	3606.00	3716.40	3835.80	4051.80	4161.30	4347.30	4450.50	4704.90
E-7	2339.10	2553.00	2650.80	2780.70	2881.50	3055.20	3152.70	3250.20	3424.20	3511.20	3593.70	3644.10	3814.80	3925.20	4204.20
E-6	2023.20	2226.00	2324.40	2419.80	2519.40	2744.10	2831.40	2928.30	3013.50	3043.50	3064.50	3064.50	3064.50	3064.50	3064.50
E-5	1854.00	1977.90	2073.30	2171.40	2323.80	2454.90	2551.50	2582.10	2582.10	2582.10	2582.10	2582.10	2582.10	2582.10	2582.10
E-4	1699.50	1786.50	1883.10	1978.50	2062.80	2062.80	2062.80	2062.80	2062.80	2062.80	2062.80	2062.80	2062.80	2062.80	2062.80
E-3	1534.20	1630.80	1729.20	1729.20	1729.20	1729.20	1729.20	1729.20	1729.20	1729.20	1729.20	1729.20	1729.20	1729.20	1729.20
E-2	1458.90	1458.90	1458.90	1458.90	1458.90	1458.90	1458.90	1458.90	1458.90	1458.90	1458.90	1458.90	1458.90	1458.90	1458.90
E-1 >4	1301.40	1301.40	1301.40	1301.40	1301.40	1301.40	1301.40	1301.40	1301.40	1301.40	1301.40	1301.40	1301.40	1301.40	1301.40
E-1 <4	1203.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

TELEVISION



	8:00p.m.	8:30p.m.	9:00p.m.	9:30p.m.	10:00p.m.	10:30p.m.	11:00p.m.
AFN sports	Fiesta Bowl	ESPNNews	Sports Center		College Football Final		Sports Center
AFN prime ATLANTIC	CBS Evening News	ESPNNews	Prime News Tonight		NBC Nightly News	ABC World News	Seasme Street
AFN news	The Newshour With Jim Lehrer	Special Report With Brit Hume	Your World With Neil Cavuto		World News Now		